

South Africa, the Global Immigration Crisis and the Challenge of African Solidarity



People who come because they think that Europe is a prosperous continent... must be escorted back, that's the rule. Francoise Hollande, President of France, on African and Middle Eastern immigrants to Europe.

By Ademola Araoye

The challenges of immigration and its management are global.

It is estimated that migrants that traversed international boundaries more than doubled between 1980 and 2010. They increased from 103 million to 220 million. In 2013, the number of international migrants was put at 232 million and projected to double to over 400 million by 2050.¹ Philip Martin, a professor of the Comparative Immigration and Integration Programme, also notes that about 60 percent of global migrants are in the 30 or more industrialised countries. Some 40 percent of migrants are in the 170 poorer developing

countries. Almost half of the world's migrants are women, 15 percent of migrants are under 20, and less than 7 percent of all international migrants are refugees. In the new millennium, immigration has acquired greater import and has become more complex the world over. Immigration has historically confronted the idea of territoriality, the behaviour of animals or people that try to keep others away from an area that they assert to be theirs or seize control of. Territoriality may also be directly associated with attempts by various animals and groups to protect the integrity of their communities in the long term.

Accordingly mass movements, even if they are undertaken as individuals or in small groups at a time, have been problematic since the beginning of human movements.

The human attitude of instinctive perception of threats posed by increased human movements, interpreted as invasion, encroachment or breaches of territoriality from the outside, has lagged behind historic advances in concepts in global modes of social organisations, political and economic. At the same time, it is clear that profound transformation in the sensibilities of international society has impacted on the new definition and

anticipated responses to this historic conundrum. It may be posited that the transformed or evolving international sensibilities have impacted on the expectations of how immigrants are treated. These emerging new impulses are however at variance with the overall postures of state policy that are still founded on realist principles in a significantly or struggling post-realist international environment. For realists, the most important national interest is the survival of the state, including its people, political system, and territorial integrity. Realists contend that, as long as the world is divided into nation-states in an anarchic setting, national interest will remain the essence of international politics. Accordingly, realists perceive danger posed by mass immigration to the integrity of national interests, including the dominant culture. Post-realist focus less on power and depreciate the centrality of power in relations between states. In fact they challenge the legitimacy of force in the interaction among states. They are less resistant to immigration. This different orientation has led to sharp discourses internal to states and among states on the global immigration crisis.

The interplay of domestic political factors and forces impinge on the policy responses to the challenge of immigration. This is an acute consideration in the African environment, where a pervasive sense of the unlimited solidarity of the earthly wretched across international frontiers in Africa is deeply and conveniently ingrained in society. Borders exist only in reality, but not in any mental recognition of their existence. They are therefore meant to be breached in Africa. It is much more so in relation to continental perceptions of a sense of entitlement to an open black ruled post-Apartheid South Africa given its special place in the tortuous story of African emancipation, its sterling economy and the universality of its ideological motor that drove its liberation struggle.

These expectations are not mediated by a keener appreciation of the excruciating internal configurations that persist merely two decades into black majority rule. These include certain persisting mind-sets that were validated by the liberation

struggle but necessarily requiring due de-legitimation in building a new South Africa. One example is the entrenchment of revolutionary violence, and a second is a problematic conceptual dichotomy of South Africa from the rest of the continent that needs to be transcended as a fundamental prerequisite to transit South Africa from its apartheid era attitude and to integrate it mentally and in actuality into the mainstream of African existential realities.

More importantly on the continental aisle is the undeniable lack of political will in many African states to stem emigration through an un-abating creation and export of mass produced poor and wearied who are primed

“In a perverse way, Europe in the immigration crisis from Africa is reaping a well-deserved self-induced evidently avoidable problem emanating directly from its reckless and tactless intervention in Libya against the advice of perceptive Africa.”

to go in search of greener pastures further abroad or in the immediate abroad. Horrendous governance paradigms persist that continue to lead to defection of a disenchanting middle class to the down and out constituencies of the wretched across the continent. Current challenges of human haemorrhage and undesirable cargo from Africa to the world and in particular to South Africa constitute an egregious abuse of African and global solidarity. The state is at the heart of this global crisis.

The grounding of the nation state as a defining autonomous sociological enclave, sovereign political space and basic economic unit is a major culprit in the contemporaneous

problematic of immigration and migrants. The nation-state's clear demarcation of territory under its sole control and the entrenchment of the concept of nationhood that defines identities in nationality and statehoods as the normative institution regulating large scale human communities have ossified the human proclivity to contain movements of those considered outsiders. The management of challenges ensuing from the ascendance of the nation state in relation to basic human freedom of movement have very often been associated with tragic consequences as the world currently witnesses in the carnage of African and Asian migrants at sea in the West Mediterranean straits off the coast of Libya to Italy; or again in the plight of the over eight thousand Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants, 'Myanmar's unwanted people', stranded at sea off the coast of Thailand for weeks unending.

In this connection, Malaysian officials noted that 1,018 Bangladeshi and Rohingya refugees had landed illegally on one of the Langkawi islands. They apparently had been abandoned by people smugglers who were transporting them to Thailand. Meanwhile, dozens have been buried in unmarked graves. This scenario unfolds elsewhere, almost everywhere. Responses in recipient societies have been similarly antagonistic, even if they are nuanced in some and less so in others. The familiar international hypocritical postures have been at play to advance political objectives. In the United States, harsh society engagements and draconian measures by non-governmental militias against migrants from South of the border are carefully packaged to assuage international sensibilities, while in others, such as South Africa, international perceptions of challenges of managing immigration are couched in terms of xenophobia. Messaging has thus been a key factor in international reaction to these responses.

In Europe, there are separate rules for migrants emanating from Europe and others. Huge numbers of European Union citizens freely move from one EU country to another. Even though they are categorised as 'migrants', they

are fully protected by EU law, unless they are fugitive criminals. Their status is quite different from that of non-EU migrants. For migrants from other places, in particular Asia, Middle East and Africa, the Dublin system applies. This system is designed to obfuscate the real intention of keeping undesirables out. In conjunction with the revised Dublin Regulation, three other legal instruments constitute the 'Dublin System': These are Regulation (EU) No. 603/2013 establishing the 'Eurodac' for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of the recast Dublin Regulation and Regulation (EU) No. 118/2014 which amends Regulation (EC) No. 1560/2003 laying down detailed rules for the application of the recast Dublin Regulation. The operation of the Dublin Regulation often acts to the detriment of refugees by causing serious delays in the examination of asylum claims. This can result in the asylum seekers' claims never being heard. The system is characterised by the excessive use of detention to enforce transfers of asylum seekers, the division of families, the denial of an effective opportunity to appeal against transfers and the limited use of the discretionary provisions within the Regulation to alleviate these and other problems. Finally, it impedes integration of refugees by forcing them to have their claims determined in Member States with which they may have no particular connection.² It is the concept of fortress Europe in practice.

Territoriality has thus remained a serious anachronistic impediment to contemporaneous social advancements that are represented by globalisation, including free movements of finance and labour, and more profoundly the evolution of the Westphalian statehood to the emergence of the post-modern, post statist and post material era. In Africa, these have been manifest in the challenge of sustaining African solidarity in a system still denominated on the outmoded planks and ethical gaps of a post-colonial statism of the African state. As the major economic destination with the largest aggregation of centripetal economic factors, South Africa has had to bear the brunt of a global phenomenon with the strength of a tsunami that is dividing Europe and

has riven apart consensus on the way forward.

The problems of human territoriality, a global phenomenon, and control of movements have been characterised by paradoxes. In the evolution of the United States, a nation of immigrants that nearly decimated the original inhabitants of the continent and defeated other claimants to territory in its West and South, the surge of immigrants to the country in the 1920s led to the development of large, thriving communities of immigrants and minorities. This wave generated a considerable backlash among so called native-born Americans who feared they were losing their cities to 'undesirable' newcomers. Before the coming of the immigrants, a large majority of the American population – more than 60% – could trace their ancestry back to

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either the British Isles or to Germany.

These old-line Americans, mostly fair-skinned and Protestant, the new White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP) of the vast and rich territory, tended to view the darker-complexioned, mostly Catholic or Jewish New Immigrants from Southern Europe as not just different but 'inferior' — members of lesser races, likely lacking the Anglo-Saxon temperament many believed necessary to maintain a free society.³

In Australia, a colony of migrants, a federated Australia was created to develop a common immigration policy that reflected the resistance to Chinese immigration. A White Australia policy was articulated to exclude all non-European people from immigrating into Australia, and was the official policy of all governments

and all mainstream political parties in Australia from the 1890s to the 1950s. Elements of the policy survived until the 1970s. Although the expression 'White Australia policy' was never in official use, it was common in political and public debate throughout the period. In South Africa, the Boers, also known as Afrikaners, descendants of the original Dutch settlers of southern Africa, declared a Republic of South Africa that excluded the original inhabitants of the region through its Apartheid policy.

Some scholars believe apartheid was a product of racial prejudices and policies imposed by Dutch and British settlers. Recent scholarship highlights a combination of several factors that paved the way to apartheid, including colonial conquest, dispossession of the inhabitants, deliberate economic impoverishment and racial discrimination and segregation. What emerges from history is that territoriality associated with statehood and nationality remained a bane of the ideas of freedom of movement, to such an extent that today a debilitating global crisis of immigration has emerged from the United States, through Europe, Australia and in South Africa. This article examines the challenge of South Africa in managing immigration against the background of its continued dedication to African solidarity as a critical plank of the African Renaissance project in a Post Mandela World Order; and it puts this into global and historical contexts, as well as locating the challenges in the domestic socio-political and economic ferment.

In the post-modernist dispensation and an increasingly globalised world with transformed humanist sensibilities of international society as distinct from an international community of formal states, immigration has broken down its long confinement to specialist discourses of demography, jurisprudence and public policy analysis and its increasing relation to macro processes of social change and the transformation of nation states as highlighted by many distinguished scholars of immigration, especially in the context of globalisation.⁴ Araoye⁵ observes that post-modern states have developed transnational networks

of causes, based on shared values that bind civil society across state boundaries and enhance interests in international rules regulating these causes. This drives a new transnational political process that assures the acceptance by the states of the new principles which undermine old notions of sovereignty associated with the modern state. The states accept that international law has emerged as a regular feature of modern political life. Also, the post-modern order is built upon a new type of nation state which 'pools' together its sovereignty with other states and accepts transnational and supranational legal authority above its own national law.⁶

Accordingly, post-modern states have repudiated the realist principles that guide interaction among modern states and no longer place emphasis on the use of force as a medium of transactions between them. They are thus in a post-realist era. While some of the main challenges of immigration elicited by the large scale movement of labour internationally across national boundaries, including a potential loss of sovereignty over entry and exit of national borders, seem to have been accentuated by recent developments, immigration has become a complex and multifaceted phenomenon spanning the ideological, economic and developmental, humanitarian and sociological, and even acquired a moral tone. The emerged complexity of mass movement of people across borders globally has rendered policy formulation very demanding and contentious as states and whole continents seek to grapple with the emerged multi-dimensional challenges posed by this international crisis.

The post-modernists, often referred to as transnationalists, have faced a stiff rebuttal from conservative citizens on immigration who have derided them as trendy philosophical internationalists who are advocating the juggling of conflicting national and cultural allegiances, and call for the attenuation of specific national loyalties. The post-modernists on immigration are dismissed as mostly privileged academicians insulated from the realities of the world by tenure, who strenuously oppose the right to

select and emphasise one aspect of the multiple cultural and national identities human beings possess. They are seen as constituting an intellectual advocate for the breakdown of law, for the repudiation of historical notions of what makes nation states and civil society, undermining civic traditions, professing the violation of the sanctity of borders that once commanded unquestioned assent, and using a term like patriotism only jokingly.⁷

The reality however is that some neo-liberals accept the beneficial impact of an open immigration regime. In the United Kingdom, a neo-liberal commentator was clear that high levels of immigration are part and parcel of neoliberalism, because they offer speedy, few-questions-asked economic growth. For some reason, however, both Labour and the Conservatives have shied away from explaining to 'ordinary people' that immigrants provide a steady supply of labour, stopping 'ordinary' wages and expectations from getting out of hand.⁸

For those on the left, international solidarity imposes the imperative of joining forces to liberate workers, irrespective of nationality, race or gender. The division is thus strictly not only ideological but is manifested in differing attitudes and orientations that have impacted on immigration policy in Europe, the USA, Asia, Latin America and Australia.

Meanwhile, all over the world, from the USA, through Ukraine, Austria, France, Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, and China immigrants have been made scapegoats. The differences are in the approaches and who is leading the charge against foreigners. In the United States and Europe, where the state leads the charge against foreigners, the assaults are very nuanced and couched in a language that confers legitimacy. Historically, discriminatory immigration policies aimed at southern and eastern Europeans were prominent in the quota-based policies of the 1920s. Through the Immigration Act of 1924, also known as the National Origins Act or Johnson-Reed Act, the U.S. used restrictive immigration policies in the 1920s based on the 1890 proportions of foreign-born European nationalities. It was also held that immigrants from

southern and eastern Europe were unskilled, ignorant, predominantly Catholic or Jewish and not easily assimilated into American culture.⁹ A century and half later, to protect the threatened hegemony of the WASP dominant USA, or in Australia, the more sophisticated institutional violence that was unleashed was taken off the streets and rationalised in carefully couched euphemisms in carefully arranged and managed bogus discourse. Violence against foreigners can be very crude when the militias, both from the mainstream as in the USA and Australia, or the margins as in South Africa take it upon themselves to help the government to solve perceived threats of foreign invasion. This real xenophobia is a recurrent phenomenon or a crisis that belies globalisation.

The United States shares a common border of about 2,000 miles (3,200 kms) with Mexico and has a large Latino community. This is the largest minority and fastest growing community in the United States. The US Customs and Border Protection spent \$2.4 billion between 2006 and 2009 to complete 670 miles of border fence that is designed to keep foreigners or their vehicles from crossing into the United States, according to a Government Accountability Office report. When completed the cost of this state-of-the-art border fence has been estimated at between four and eight billion dollars. A poll conducted by a conservative news outlet suggests that the American people favoured a proposal to construct this 2,000 mile security fence by a 51-to-37 percent margin.

Meanwhile, the total illegal alien population was estimated by Secretary of Homeland Security at 8 to 12 million in December 2003, even though to heighten perception of the threat posed to the American way of life, some major news outlets regularly use 20 million as a more realistic number of illegal aliens in the US. The conservatives who are the main backers of fencing off the Mexican border claim that a sea of illegal aliens provides a cover and an environment in which terrorists can hide, and the tide of in-coming aliens provides terrorists with a reliable

means of entry. They also allege that foreigners are drug couriers. Such is the fear of Latino immigrants that private minutemen and anti-immigrant militias have been established in states like Texas and Arizona 'to do the job their government refuses to do' and 'protect America' from tens of millions plundering 'our' nation. They argue that 'it should be legal to kill illegals.'

In Australia, the government dumps desperate immigrants who have survived perilous sea journeys to escape poverty and discrimination in facilities totally inappropriate and ill-equipped, with people cramped into leaking tents, suffering from physical and mental ailments, creating a climate of anguish, especially during the repressively hot monsoon season. Australia is also known to have refused to rescue boat people caught in storms who died when their boats capsized. The waiting time to be processed in this uninhabitable hell located in Nauru is five years under the Government's horrendous 'no advantage' policy. Offshore processing of the so-called illegals on Nauru and Manus Island is designed to break vulnerable people in these ill-conceived limbo camps.

China's very stringent monitoring of foreigners is legendary as many Africans are forced into debt and imprisoned for merely overstaying their visa. There have been deadly

riots. Also the perennial conflagration in the outskirts and ghettos of French cities need no recall. The French government is known to have offered monetary incentives to get rid of unwanted foreigners, including 'gypsies' or Romans, who were once forcibly ejected from the country.

In Africa, South Africa has been singularly hit by this world-wide phenomenon. This was inevitably a near and popular destination for the poor and wearied of Africa and Asia. Barely two decades into its majority rule, in the context of its internal challenges and the struggle as with most states hit by this global challenge, South Africa has paid the price of sluggish messaging and faced the familiar hypocrisy of a world that has traditionally designed one measure for Africa and another for itself. But it is Africa that has been caught in the beams of the hypocritical international searchlight.

The challenge of immigration into South Africa opens an opportunity to examine our own assumptions in relation to principles and expectations that underpin intra-African relations, develop common understandings and map out strategies for the management of relationships. Whatever compulsions, instinctive, emotional or plain and hard-nosed rational, drive our responses to recent developments

in the country, sight cannot be lost of the ready label of xenophobia that was stuck on the ugly outbreak of violence visited upon non-South African migrants. Yet, the pertinent question is, "Was this really xenophobia?" The issue is framed by columnist Mathatha Tsedu, who put it in the Johannesburg *City Press* as "Why are we failing as Africans?"

Meanwhile, the campaign and activism against xenophobia of African artists resident in South Africa seems to be a simplistic framing of the international crisis that does not get to the real heart of the challenge. The xenophobic type attacks are symptomatic of larger festering challenges that South Africa has been unable to resolve in twenty-one years of post-Apartheid black rule. South Africa has been unable to wean itself from some of the most devastating legacies of Apartheid. This includes the de-legitimising of a dangerous mind-set that was needed to validate the revolutionary violence that was unleashed to overcome Apartheid. The structures of the economy remain skewed and South African society increasingly differentiated between an emerged small black elite and a mass black impoverished. These failures have all impacted on the character of post-Apartheid South African society with serious consequences.

TABLE 1
Reasons why Africans leave their home countries for South Africa

Variables	Origin of African immigrants entrepreneurs									
	Nigeria N= 40		Somalia N= 40		Senegal N= 20		Other** N= 20		Total N=120	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Political instability	12	30	40	100	2	10	10	50	64	53
Perception of business opportunities in RSA	15	38	0	0	6	30	2	10	23	19
Economic reasons	8	20	0	0	9	45	3	15	20	17
Visit	2	5	0	0	3	15	2	10	7	6
Other*	3	8	0	0	0	0	3	15	6	5
TOTAL	40	100	40	100	20	100	20	100	120	100
N: Number of respondents					F: Frequency					

* The group designated as 'Other' comprises family problems, marriage, study, adventure etc.

** The group of countries designated as other comprises of Cameroon (6), Tanzania (5), Angola (4), Zimbabwe (2), Rwanda (2) and Morocco (1).

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Main street South Africa deals with the horror of unimaginable violence practically on a daily basis. But this happens behind the fortified walls of highly secured gated communities. Once in a while, this sanguine reality is expressed along the margins of mainstream of South Africa in the scapegoating of fellow Africans. The pattern of violence suggests a systemic trauma that impacts on both foreigners and South Africans alike. Even the men's hostel, a hold-over idea from the Apartheid era, has not yet been dismantled. Violence witnessed in the past few months seems to manifest a crisis that has engulfed this embattled rainbow nation. All residents of the country, across the social strata, are caught in the throes of violence. Only a very brutal re-evaluation of flailing social and developmental paradigms employed by the South African government can begin to instil a semblance of normalcy in relations among South Africans, between South Africans and the continent. These harsh measures to be adopted are the default approaches that have been adopted in many other African countries. It would require the understanding of other Africans to give South Africa a chance to recalibrate its economic and social blueprint to meet the legitimate aspirations of those in the margins who perceive themselves as being left behind, as South Africa moves into its third decade of majority rule.

The South African situation deviates in many respects from these cases. South Africans often assume that since the end of apartheid and the coming of democracy in 1994, there has been a huge wave of migration into their country from the rest of the continent. But in reality, the figures remain unclear. The country's Human Sciences Research Council once estimated that there are 4 to 8 million undocumented migrants in South Africa, but Statistics South Africa, a government agency, estimates undocumented persons in the country to be somewhere in the range of 500,000 to 1 million. Meanwhile, the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg assesses that the overall foreign population in South Africa ranges from 1.6 to 2 million, or 3 to 4 percent of the total population. They

also report that there are between 1 and 1.5 million legal and illegal Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa. This is in the context of national unemployment that has long been a major preoccupation for the South African Government. Despite its high unemployment rate, South Africa has the highest number of immigrants in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).¹⁰

Whatever the volume of the problem of illegal migrants in South Africa, the problem is that official South Africa is caught on the horns of a dilemma. It must resolve the challenge of accommodating its sprawling and roiling internal constituency of those who are left behind while being, at the

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same time, sensitive to the demands of African solidarity in managing the avalanche of fleeing economic migrants from badly managed African countries. And it must achieve this without provoking the kind of backlash that it recently experienced. That is not all. Its balancing act is in the context of a very difficult national process.

Table 1 reveals that more than half of those seeking to leave their homes to settle in South Africa cite political reasons for their decisions. Added to the 17% that may be termed economic migrants, also related to governance issues, it can be proposed that over 70% of potential migrants from Africa do so for political reasons.

The current challenge betrays the turbulent undercurrents of South Africa's politics, in particular the structure of its economy and their impact on national life. The shocking hackings to death of foreigners, now symbolised by the brutal daylight stalking, bludgeoning and stabbing to death of Mozambican Emmanuel Sithole, are strong reminders of the dire consequences of the pervasive disillusionment of the black masses in post-Apartheid South Africa. They can easily turn to criminality as the Sithole case demonstrated. The attacks, which seem to have been interpreted as a product of xenophobia are indeed the other side of the criminal violence that seem to have become a quotidian reality of this land struggling hard to translate its vision of a rainbow nation into actuality. Young uneducated black South Africans have felt strongly disadvantaged in the competition in the retail trade and petty services that have been taken over by fellow Africans from the continent as well as from South Asia. The tension had been palpable for some time with a few well-meaning commentators drawing attention to the keg of gun powder in South Africa's national lounge. Indeed the margins of South Africa would seem to have been given a short shrift and this is at the heart of the internal debate within the ANC.

But the situation has arisen not because of a lack of trying by the ANC. South Africa recognised early that “no economy can grow by excluding any part of its people, and an economy that is not growing cannot integrate all of its citizens in a meaningful way” – from South Africa's black economic empowerment strategy document. The need to build an economy that is anchored on the full potential of all persons and communities across the length and breadth of this country has been central to the thinking on empowering all. Despite the many economic gains made in the country since 1994, the racial divide between rich and poor has persisted. The profound danger of such inequalities on political stability has been long realised. It was highlighted that societies characterised by entrenched gender inequality or racially or ethnically

defined wealth disparities are not likely to be socially and politically stable, particularly as economic growth can exacerbate these inequalities. The ANC's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) programme was designed, amongst other objectives, to create a black middle strata. South Africa's BEE policy is not simply a moral initiative to redress the wrongs of the past. It is a growth and redistribution strategy that aims to realise the country's full economic potential while helping to bring the black majority into the economic mainstream.¹¹

The idea was that this new black middle strata would create avenues for the empowerment to impact on the black community as a whole. Although some remarkable progress has been attained, the expected downward cascading impact of BEE has been slow. The black majority who were denied any education or who were outright victims of the Apartheid policy of deliberately stifling the development of the entrepreneurial capacity of blacks are not a match for the more experienced Somalis, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans. As is often the case with immigrants, the foreigners are more motivated to work extremely hard and to save through self-imposed privations. Often too these communities of foreigners are not integrated.

What all this suggests is that South Africa must resolve its internal contradictions and dilemmas. Pretoria has to bite the bullet and institute an indigenisation policy that must definitively restrict some of the activities of foreigners to more advanced and relatively capitalised ventures and sectors of the economy. South Africa has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world. Unemployment is a staggering problem especially as the unemployed are often also unemployable. Even by official estimates, which tend to be conservative, the unemployment rate in South Africa decreased to 24.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014 from 25.40 percent in the third quarter of 2014. The unemployment rate in South Africa averaged 25.25 percent from 2000 until 2014, reaching an all-time high of 31.20 percent in the

first quarter of 2003 and a record low of 21.50 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008. Another source highlights that by 2014 the black African unemployment rate had declined from 43% to 40%. It notes that this is of no comfort to the additional 3.1 million black African workforce unemployed. Since many in this category are unemployable and have no history and culture of working, it would require some measure of affirmative mobilisation to inculcate a new working ethic, create self-employment niches and nurture this category of deprived South Africans into constructive participants in society and economy.

Therefore, an open door policy

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to all of Africa's poor and wearied cannot be an option. As it currently stands, South Africa's kind of selfless solidarity is very unrealistic and can only sharpen current antagonisms between poor black South Africans and other Africans. Solidarity unlimited is a politically defeatist route for the ANC. South Africa must find creative alternatives to pacify its roaring mass of disenchanted. It is an imperative to defuse the ticking time bomb.

Some sacrifices are therefore required. South Africa must limit the participation of non-South Africans in some of its soft sectors. The retail sector, with clearly specified limits that are within the capacity of marginalised

South Africans, should preferably restrict the number of foreign owned shops. Also, at the next level, Africans who so desire should enter into partnerships with South Africans in retail and bigger wholesale outlets to enhance the stakes of South African blacks in these joint enterprises. This would be nothing innovative as it is the practice in many African counties, including Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria. South African Development Community or no SADC, some soft sectors of the economy that have the potential to serve as platforms for the apprenticeship of the most business savvy of the lumpen mass lot should rightfully be reserved for South African nationals.

The South African government should also provide lending facilities that are accompanied or preceded by training in the management of small businesses with economic outreach officers from financial institutions to provide advisory services to this new cadres of Small and Medium young black entrepreneurs.

Also directly relevant is the need to reorient South Africans psychologically to begin to see themselves and their nation as an integral part and parcel of Africa. The entrenched notion of South Africa as an autonomous social universe vis-à-vis the rest of the Continent should be addressed through formal and informal engagements with South African society. In this connection, Africa has the technological infrastructure to begin the cultivation of transnational people-to-people networks in the continent.

As for the rest of Africa, it is high time we learnt that we cannot continue to shirk our responsibilities at home and expect others to clean up after us. We are daily assaulted on our television screens by the consequences of the pervasive irresponsibility of our states and leadership as Africans choose to expose themselves to unimaginable risks of near certain death just to earn a menial living in Europe. It is significant that the regional distribution of the recipients of permanent resident status in South Africa indicates that there were more recipients from Africa (67%) than those from overseas (33%). The leading countries from Africa are Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia,

Swaziland, the DRC, Nigeria, Lesotho, Cameroon, Congo, Zambia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. Recipients from these countries received 85.2% of the Permanent Residence Permits issued. Even if only anecdotally, one could talk of a strong correlation between the nature of domestic political governance of the origins of the African recipients and the fulfilled desire to emigrate.

More tragically recently over 6 000 migrants from Africa and nearby have been pulled out of certain death in the ocean by the Italian navy. The other side is over 1 000 illegal immigrants into Europe just perished in the Mediterranean Sea on the way to Lampedusa on the Central Mediterranean route from Libya. The reasons can be adduced from Table 1. Seventy per cent of all those travelling to South Africa gave reasons that reflect poor governance at home as they chose to vote with their feet to South Africa. Even excluding the so called xenophobic attacks, Africans are dying in horrific circumstances just to escape the fate at home. African governments must empathise with the situation in South Africa and work to ensure that the solidarity of official South Africa is not abused any further. The global immigration crisis partly reflects the consequences of so much official irresponsibility in our national lives. The events unfolding in Burundi today are indicative of the generation of a new wave of African defectors on the way to near certain death abroad, far or near.

Yet, while the appalling normative regimes of governance in the African state significantly motivate the desire of many Africans to emigrate, the spike of poor African potential migrants actually taking the risk, a major feature of the current international immigration crisis, cannot be divorced from the unilateral interventions designed to advance strategic objectives of elite extra-African forces in Africa. The timing of the current wave of immigrants, especially from Africa, resulting in the international immigration crisis, is clearly linked to the implosion of the Libyan state following the intervention of extra-African forces, mainly France and Great Britain, co-opting NATO, to push for a military ouster of Libya leader Muammar Gaddafi. Now,

Europe, notably France, is nervous about receiving immigrants from the current crisis, with the anti-immigration National Front doing so well in the polls, and countries in Eastern and Central Europe, which house very few asylum seekers, do not want to start opening their doors now.

Belatedly, in early May, 2015, European Council President Donald Tusk affirmed that Europe will step up efforts to address conflict and instability as key push factors of migration. Mr. Tusk added that the EU would co-ordinate the resettlement of more people to Europe on a voluntary basis and, in classic double speak, "with an option for emergency relocation". Meanwhile, in the unfolding tragedy, by 21 April the UN refugee agency UNHCR reported that so far in 2015 a total of 36,390 migrants had reached Italy, Greece and Malta by sea. It put the number of dead at 1,750 and missing at 1,776 – including those in the shipwreck on 19 April which claimed an estimated 800 lives.

Europe has thus remained consistent in adopting pragmatic and convenient policies toward Africa. The interest of the West in the Libyan conflict, as with other conflicts in the Third World, was not motivated by the love of Libya or Africans. Their engagements ultimately are only to advance their strategic goals, notwithstanding the potential destructive consequences for the states and societies at the receiving end of this poisonous tough love. In the case of Libya, Europe, pursuing a single minded policy of regime change no matter what the aftermath of this intervention, brushed aside the far-sighted advice of key African states and statespersons to work toward a negotiated resolution of the crisis. A negotiated resolution of the Libyan conflict, as consistently advocated by major and insightful African stakeholders, would have reduced the prospects in the post Gaddafi era of the various nightmares that now confront Africa in the devastating destabilisation of the Sahel and the instability in Libya and its Mediterranean coast. The rise of Islamic militancy in the Sahel is another direct outcome of the disastrous western interventions in Libya.

Vivienne Walt¹² affirms that the

disputed details over what happened the day Muammar Gaddafi was executed still fuels the explosive violence in Libya pitting the vengeful remnants of Gaddafi's loyalists against the patchwork of militias who overthrew Gaddafi. The inability of the numerous Libyan warlords facilitated to power by the West to coerce or negotiate the country back to normal statehood has given rise to criminal gangs who have appropriated power in the various regions of the distressed country. The spike in illegal immigration as far as Africa is concerned is a direct result of the abandonment of the broken humpty dumpty Libya to its own devices by the European powers that were so enthusiastically engaged on the side of the rebels. The lesson is the need for Africa and the African Union to strengthen their capacity to leverage the political clout of the continent to ensure a hegemonic influence on African affairs. In a perverse way, Europe in the immigration crisis from Africa is reaping a well-deserved self-induced evidently avoidable problem emanating directly from its reckless and tactless intervention in Libya against the advice of perceptive Africa. ■

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- ⁷ Dr. Stephen Steinlight was for more than five years Director of National Affairs (domestic policy) at the American Jewish Committee. For the past two and a half years he has been a Senior Fellow at AJC. He is co-editor of the forthcoming *Fractious Nation: Race, Class and Culture in America at the End of the Twentieth Century* (UC-Berkeley Press), and he has recently been appointed editor of *South Asia: In Review*.
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